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SB 939 AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTIONS RELATED STATUTES

Good morning Representative Morin, Senator Slossberg and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee, my name is Bill Jenkins. I have been the Republican Registrar of Voters in Chaplin since 2006.

This bill has some overlap with SB 938 and includes some additional provisions.

One of these is eliminating the provision that allows municipalities to have a registrar for each voting district (if voted upon by its legislative body) and increasing the term for all registrars and town clerks to four years. I feel very strongly that municipalities should continue to be allowed to elect their town clerks and registrars as they see fit. Current law allows municipalities to elect their registrars and town clerks to either two or four year terms. I believe this option should remain in the hands of the municipalities and not the state so I would respectfully request that sections 23, 24 & 47 be removed from this bill.

Section 19 of this bill will now require the town clerk to consult with the registrars prior to ordering absentee ballots which are the sole responsibility of the town clerk. I see no need for this legislation. While it may be a good idea for the town clerk to consult with the registrars, this is not something that needs to be or should be legislated.

Many parts of this bill appear to attempt to make provisional ballots apply for state and municipal offices and remove all references to challenge ballots. Challenge ballots and provisional ballots are used in two different sets of circumstances. Due to the short amount of time I've had to review this bill, I'm still not entirely at ease with the sections of this bill that are changing the definitions and circumstances for challenge and provisional ballots.

There is a grammatical error in Section 32 of this bill which changes 9-235. The second to the last sentence is proposed to read "If any such unofficial checker interferes with the orderly process of voting or attempts to influence any elector, [he] such unofficial shall be evicted by the moderator." "such unofficial" should read "such unofficial checker"

Section 35 of this bill revises 9-247a to prohibit the immediate family member of a candidate from serving as a moderator. I completely disagree with this proposed

language and suggest that it be removed from the bill. Under current law, moderators take an oath to perform their duties "completely impartial with respect to any candidate or political party" which is more than adequate in my opinion.

Thank you very much for including Section 38 in this bill which changes 9-258 to allow towns with only one voting district such as Chaplin and many other small towns to have our official poll workers be electors of the state instead of just limiting official poll workers to be electors of the town. Larger towns with more than one voting district are already allowed under current law to use poll workers from others towns and the one district towns should also be allowed to do this as well.

Section 44 is a new section that will require every registrar every year to notify the Secretary of the State all polling place locations. I don't see the need for this and I foresee a bureaucratic nightmare if this were to become law. If my polling place is the same place it has been since 1975 then why should I have to report every year that it didn't move?

Section 50 revises 9-235d to remove the position of "challenger. Challengers are appointed by the registrars under 9-232 and "may challenge the right of any person offering to vote, on the ground of want of identity with the person on whose name the vote is offered, or disfranchisement or lack of bona fide residence." These positions should remain and not be eliminated.

Section 54 of this bill forces the elector to vote only once for cross-endorsed candidates. This was not allowed with the lever machines and should not be allowed with the tabulators. Presently, the tabulators allow an elector to vote more than once for a cross-endorsed candidate and force the election officials to attribute the electors vote to one of the parties the candidate is endorsed by. This is wrong and this legislation corrects this problem.